NUMB. CCXXVIII.

The SPECTATOR.

Percunctatorem fugito, nam Garrulus idem eſt. Hor.

Wedneſday, November 21. 1711.

THERE is a Creature who has all the Organs of Speech, a tollerable good Capacity for conceiving what is ſaid to it, together with a pretty proper Behaviour Occurences of common Life; but naturalcant of Thought in it ſelf, and therefore to apply it ſelf to foreign Aſſiſtances. Of is that Man who is very inquiſitive: You obſerve, that though he ſpeaks as good Man upon any thing with which he is inted, he cannot truſt to the Range of his to entertain himſelf upon that Founda- goes on to ſtill new Enquiries. Thus, know he is fit for the moſt polite Con- ou ſhall ſee him very well contented to ey giving an Account of the many Re- his Horſe's Health, what Potion he ke, how that agreed with him, how e came to his Stomach and his Exer- the like Impertinence; and be as well if you talked to him on the moſt impor- This Humour is far from making a py, though it may ſubject him to Rail- generally falls in with a Perſon who born for him, which is your talkative it is ſo ordered that there is a ſecret Bent, the Meeting of different Sexes, in Characters, to ſupply each o- I had the Honour the other Day to k Room, and ſaw an inquiſitive Man Air of Satisfaction upon the Approach theſe Talkers. The Man of ready Ut- down by him; and rubbing his Head, his Arm, and making an uneaſy Coun- began; 'There is no Manner of News I cannot tell what is the Matter with I ſlept very ill laſt Night; whether I Cold or no I know not, but I fancy I do Shooes thick enough for the Weather, coughed all this Week: It muſt be ſo, Cuſtom of waſhing my Head Winter and with cold Water, prevents any Injury Reaſon entering that Way; ſo it muſt my Feet: But I take no Notice of it, ſo it goes. Moſt of our Evils pro- too much Tenderneſs; and our Faces as little able to reſiſt the Cold as o- The *Indian* anſwered very well to who aſked him how he could go I am all Face.

I obſerved this Diſcourſe was as welcome to my general Inquirer as any other of more Conſequence could have been; but ſome Body calling our Talker to another Part of the Room, the Inquirer told the next Man who ſat by him, that Mr. ſuch a one, who was juſt gone from him, uſed to waſh his Head in cold Water every Morning; and ſo repeated almoſt *Verbatim* all that had been ſaid to him. The Truth is, the Inquiſitive are the Funnels of Converſation; they do not take in any thing for their own Uſe, but merely to paſs it to another: They are the Channels through which all the Good and Evil that is ſpoken in Town are conveyed. Such as are offended at them, or think they ſuffer by their Behaviour, may themſelves mend that Inconvenience; for they are not a malicious People, and if you will ſupply them, you may contradict any thing they have ſaid before by their own Mouths. A further Account of a thing is one of the grateful-leſt Goods that can arrive to them; and it is ſeldom that they are more particular than to ſay, The Town will have it, or, I have it from a good Hand: So that there is Room for the Town to know the Matter more particularly, and for a better Hand to contradict what was ſaid by a good one.

I have not known this Humour more ridiculous than in a Father, who has been earneſtly ſolliciteous to have an Account how his Son has paſſed his leiſure Hours; if it be in a Way thoroughly inſignificant, there cannot be a greater Joy than an Inquirer diſcovers in ſeeing him follow ſo hopefully his own Steps: But this Humour among Men is moſt pleaſant when they are ſaying ſomething which is not wholly proper for a third Perſon to hear, and yet is in it ſelf indifferent. The other Day there came in a well-dreſſed young Fellow, and two Gentlemen of this Species immediately fell a whiſpering his Pedigree. I could over-hear, by Breaks, She was his Aunt; then an Anſwer, Ay, ſhe was of the Mother's Side: Then again in a little lower Voice, His Father wore generally a darker Wig; Anſwer, Not much. But this Gentleman wears higher Heels to his Shooes.

As the Inquiſitive, in my Opinion, are ſuch meerly from a Vacancy in their own Imaginations, there is nothing, methinks, ſo dangerous as to communicate Secrets to them; for the ſame Temper of Inquiry makes them, as impertinently communicative: But no Man though he converſes with them need put himſelf in their Power, for they will be contented

contented with Matters of leſs Moment as well. When there is full Fewel enough, no Matter what it is——Thus the Ends of Sentences in the News Papers, as *Thirwauns Confirmation*, *This occaſions many Speculations*, *And Time will diſcover the Event*, are read by them, and conſidered not as meer Expletives.

One may ſee now and then this Humour accompanied with an inſatiable Deſire of knowing what paſſes, without turning it to any Uſe in the World but meerly their own Entertainment. A Mind which is gratified this Way is adapted to Humour and Pleaſantry, and formed for an unconcerned Character in the World; and like my ſelf to be a meer Spectator. This Curioſity, without Malice or Self-Intereſt, lays up in the Imagination a Magazine of Circumſtances which cannot but entertain when they are produced in Converſation. If one were to know from the Man of the firſt Quality to the meaneſt Servant, the different Intrigues, Sentiments, Pleaſures and Intereſts of Mankind, would it not be the moſt pleaſing Entertainment imaginable to enjoy ſo conſtant a Farce, as the obſerving Mankind much more different from themſelves in their ſecret Thoughts and publick Actions, than in their Night-Caps and long Periwiggs?

Mr. SPECTATOR,

'PLutarch tells us, that *Caius Gracchus*, the *Roman*, 'was frequently hurried by his Paſſion into 'ſo loud and tumultuous a Way of ſpeaking, and ſo 'ſtrained his Voice, as not to be able to proceed. 'To remedy this Exceſs, he had an ingenious Ser- 'vant, by Name *Licinius*, always attending him 'with a Pitch Pipe, or Inſtrument, to regulate the 'Voice; who, whenever he heard his Maſter be- 'gin to be high, immediately touched a ſoft Note; 'at which, 'tis ſaid, *Caius* would preſently abate 'and grow calm.

'Upon recollecting this Story, I have frequent- 'ly wondered that this uſeful Inſtrument ſhould 'have been ſo long diſcontinued; eſpecially ſince 'we find that this good Office of *Licinius* has pre- 'ſerved his Memory for many hundred Years; 'which, methinks, ſhould have encouraged ſome 'one to have revived it, if not for the publick 'Good, yet for his own Credit. It may be ob- 'jected, that our loud Talkers are ſo fond of their 'own Noiſe, that they would not take it well to 'be checked by their Servants: But granting this 'to be true, ſurely any of their Hearers have a ve- 'ry good Title to play a ſoft Note, in their own 'Defence. To be ſhort, no *Licinius* appearing, 'and the Noiſe encreaſing, I was reſolved to give 'this late long Vacation to the Good of my Coun- 'try; and I have at length, by the Aſſiſtance of an 'ingenious Artiſt, (who works to the Royal Socie- 'ty) almoſt compleated my Deſign, and ſhall be 'ready in a ſhort Time to furniſh the Publick with 'what Number of theſe Inſtruments they pleaſe, 'either to lodge at Coffee-houſes, or carry for their 'own private Uſe. In the mean Time I ſhall pay 'that Reſpect to ſeveral Gentlemen who I know 'will be in Danger of offending againſt this In- 'ſtrument, to give them Notice of it by 'Letters, in which I ſhall only write, *Get a*

'I ſhould now trouble you no longer, but 'muſt not conclude without deſiring you to 'one of theſe Pipes, which ſhall be left 'with *Buckley*: and which I hope will be ſer- 'to you, ſince as you are ſilent your ſelf, 'moſt open to the Inſults of the Noiſy.

I am, Sir, &c.

W.

'I had almoſt forgot to inform you, that an 'Improvement in this Inſtrument there will 'particular Note which I call a Huſh-note; 'this is to be made uſe of againſt a long St- 'Swearing, Obſceneneſs, and the like.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

There is now printing by Subſcription two Vol- of the SPECTATORS *on a large Character in octavo; the Price of the two Vols. well Bound and Gil- Guineas. Thoſe who are inclined to ſubſcribe, are- red to make their firſt Payments to* J. Tonſon, *Bo- in the Strand; the Books being ſo near finiſhed, that will certainly be ready for the Subſcribers at or Chriſtmas next.*

The Third and Fourth Volumes of the BRITTIONS *of Iſaac Bickerſtaff, Eſq; are to be delivered at the ſame Place.*

N B. The Author deſires that ſuch Gentle- have not received their Books for which they ſcribed, would be pleaſed to ſignify the ſame Tonſon.

At the Deſire of ſeveral Perſons of Q- By Her Majeſty's Company of Com-

AT the Theatre Royal in Drur- to Morrow, being Thurſday the 22d of Nove- preſented the laſt revis'd Play call'd, Philaſter; or bleeding. The Part of Philaſter by Mr. Wilks, Bell- Sherborn, the King by Mr. Keene, Arethuſa the P- Porter, Pharamond Prince of Spain by Mr. Cibber, Mr. Mills, the Citizens by Mr. Bullock, Mr. Pack, Leigh, Mr. Burkhead, Mr. Spiller.

AT the Queen's Theatre in the Market, this preſent Wedneſday, being the 21ſt of ber, will be performed an Opera call'd, Hydaſpes. Darius to be performed by Signora Maria Roſi Piſtoc- 8 s. Pit 5 s. firſt Gallery 2 s. 6. Upper Gallery 1 s. 6. the Stage half a Guinea, the two Benches in the Pit t- the Price of the Boxes. No Perſon to be admitted- To begin exactly at Six.

Teas ſold by Wholeſale or Retail: An- to taſte that wants a Quantity. The ſtrict of Brazil Portugal 16 s. and 20 s. Barcellona 12 s. Plain Ar- with Allowance to thoſe that take a Pot of 30 Pound- Tate, Druggiſt, at the Star againſt York-Buildings in

For the Benefit of Mr. Anthony Young, of St. Clements-Danes, at Stationer's-hall, to Morrow, ſtant being St. Cæcilias Day, will be performed a Con- and Inſtrumental muſick, moſt of which will be entirely Leveridge ſings that celebrated Song, beginning, At Geſta- lend. Tickets are to be had at St. James's Coffee-houſe, Devereux-Court, John's in Sweetings Alley, and at Charl- at the Corner of Beaufort Buildings in the Strand, at

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